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Lower Columbia River and Estuary Research Needs Identification Workshop

Background and Expectations

(Bob Willis)

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Workshop Direction

- Further Collaboration
- Assist in defining critical research needs

Presentation Objectives

- B.O. requirements and ongoing activities
- COE authorities
- Research processes

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Estuary Offsite Responsibilities Under BiOp

- **RPA 160 – Corps and BPA, working with LCREP, to develop and implement an estuary restoration program with a goal of protecting and enhancing 10,000 acres of tidal wetlands and other key habitats**
- **RPA 161 – Corps and BPA fund a monitoring and research program to address the estuary objectives of the FCRPS B.O.**
- **??? What and How ???**

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Background Activities

- **Salmon at Rivers End (SARE): The Role of the Estuary in the Decline and Recovery of Columbia River Salmon (2001)**

1. **What habitat and processes support salmon in the estuary**
2. **Have changes to the estuary had a significant role in their decline**
3. **Impacts of flow regulation on hydrology, habitat, and biological interaction in the estuary ecosystem?**
4. **What estuary conditions are necessary to maintain salmon diversity?**

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Lower Columbia and Estuary Habitat Conservation and Restoration Workshop

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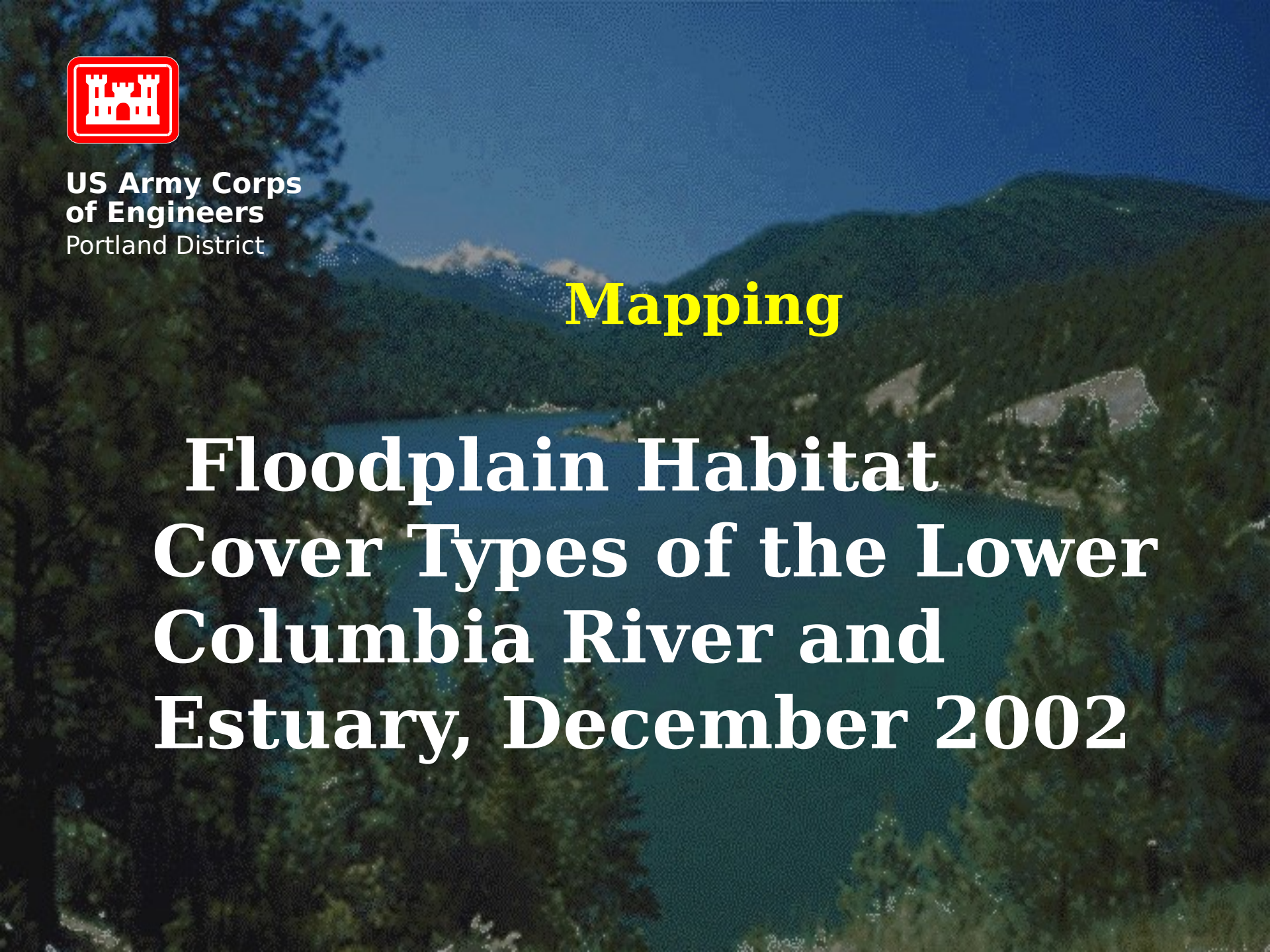
Current Research Activities

- Estuarine habitat and juvenile salmon – Current and historic linkages in the lower Columbia River and Estuary
- A Study to estimate salmonid survival through the Columbia River estuary using acoustic tags
- Evaluation of the relationship among time of entry, physical, and biological characteristics of the estuary and plume environment and adult return rates



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Mapping

Floodplain Habitat Cover Types of the Lower Columbia River and Estuary, December 2002

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Relevant Corps Authorities – applicability to RPA actions

- Continuing Authorities Sec.1135 and Sec. 206
- Section 536
- GI: potential application for large areas.
- PAS: for cost-shared studies with States/Tribes in the estuary, tributaries, mainstem.
- Columbia River Fish Mitigation Project (CRFM)

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Section 1135 Water Resources Development Act of 1986

- Modifications for improvement of the environment; restore degraded ecosystem that resulted from Corps project.
- 75% Federal / 25% non-Federal cost share, study to implementation/construction.
- $5 million per project maximum Federal expenditure.

+Operation and maintenance sponsor responsibility

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Section 206 Water Resources Development Act of 1996

- Restore degraded aquatic ecosystem to a more natural condition.
- 65% Federal / 35% non-Federal cost share, study to implementation/construction.
- $5 million per project maximum Federal expenditure.

+Operation and maintenance sponsor responsibility

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Section 536 of Water Resources Development Act of 2000

- Ecosystem restoration in the Columbia River and Tillamook Bay estuaries.
- 65% Federal / 35% non-Federal cost share.
  - Federal Lands 100% Federal share.
- Authorizes $30 million total for the two estuaries.
- Coordination with Lower Columbia River Ecosystem Partnership for Columbia River estuary.

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Planning Assistance to States and Tribes

- Study water resource-related problems.
- 50% Federal / 50% non-Federal cost share.
- Up to 50% of the non-Federal share can be in-kind, remainder in cash.
- Limited to $500K per state/tribe per year.
- Most studies range $10-50K Federal ($20-100K total).
- Study only – no implementation.

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General Investigation for Columbia River Estuary Ecosystem

- Plan for ecosystem restoration.
- Requires Cost-Sharing
- Large Projects, Land Acquisition, Investigations.

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Columbia River Fish Mitigation project

- Congressionally funded
- For Upstream Projects
- Section 582 expansion-estuarine research
- SCT prioritization

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AFEP Process

Feb/May: SRWG develops research needs

May: Development of research summaries

June: SRWG reviews and prioritizes research

July: CORPS solicits proposals

Aug: Preliminary proposals due/ Review proposals

Sept/Oct: Revise proposals and submit final

Nov: Regional AFEP research review

Dec/Jan: Finalize research proposals and funding

Feb – July: Conduct/oversee research

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Conclusion

- Collaboration
- Prioritization
- Partnership

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Corps Points of Contact

- **Portland District**

- Bob Willis, Chief, Env. Res. Branch, (503) 808-4760
  Martin Hudson, Chief, Planning Branch, (503) 808-4703
  - **CAP Program:** Doug Putman, NWP, (503) 808-4733
  - Estuary Program:Taunja Berquam, (503) 808-4757
  - AFEP Program: Rock Peters, (503) 808-4777
    Blaine Ebberts (503) 808-4763